

Doing the Right Thing

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Summary: Harry Potter left Britain after the final battle. He made a new life for himself and for the first time he was happy. But then he accidentally runs into Hermione Granger who will force him into "Doing the Right Thing" despite the fact that his life will once again be destroyed. Lots of bashing.

Doing the Right Thing

DOING THE RIGHT THING

J K Rowling owns all the rights to the books and the amazing characters she created. I write only to satisfy my imagination and use my creativity and make no money from my writings.

WARNING: Lots of bashing. This is a story I started in 2013 and finally finished.

"HARRY JAMES POTTER I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU WANT YOU ARE GOING BACK TO ENGLAND AND WILL MARRY GINNY AND THAT'S THAT" shouted a very angry Hermione Granger.

Harry sighed heavily. It was just like old times as Hermione Granger shouted out an order and Harry was supposed to humbly obey it without question. They always had this type of "conversation" with Hermione doing all of the talking and Harry just listening and saying the occasional word like "yes Hermione."

The war had been won and the rebuilding had begun and Harry Potter had foolishly hoped that he would actually be able to live his life freed not only from the threat of Voldemort, the tyranny of Magical government he had spent the last eight years living under but most importantly, free from the domination of all of those "who cared for him" but really didn't and who even now were trying to run his life years after he had left them all behind.

He had so desperately wanted to be free since both Dark Lords in

recent history " Voldemort AND Albus Dumbledore " were dead and could no longer hurt, control and ruin his life like they had both done since even before he was born.

But it was not to be as he was not only the Boy-Who-Lived but the Savior and, most disturbingly, he had been officially declared a "national treasure" and a "grateful nation" was going to show their appreciation by totally controlling his life. "For his own good" since apparently he was unable to take care of himself, THEY (whoever THEY were") were going to run his life and make all of his decisions for him.

Naturally he had run away at the first opportunity. He had thought this was going to happen so he had made plans before he went on the Horcrux hunt to claim his Potter heritage, move large chunks of it out of the country and after he did his duty (and if he survived) leave Britain and never return. It would be the only way he could have a life.

Contrary to popular belief, Harry Potter was not stupid. Far from it because if he was stupid he would never have survived the Dursleys. He had to pretend to be dumb while attending primary school as he couldn't "outshine" Dudley. Had he been allowed to do his best he would have been number one in his class and probably even skipped a grade or two.

A few of his teachers knew he wasn't living up to his potential but he had convinced them not to tell the Dursleys how smart he was other he would be beaten. These same teachers had known he was being abused but if they tried to help him they were either transferred or fired. Since it was a well-known fact at his primary school, the truly smart and helpful teachers just gave him moral support and extra books to read on the sly.

It had been the same while at Hogwarts. Harry knew within the first week of school that Ron Weasley's job was not only to keep him "dumb" or at least average, but to isolate him from making friends not only with students in the other houses but even in Gryffindor. By the end of his first year he guessed that he was being given potions or spelled to not want to do well, to be lazy, indifferent and a hell of a lot more reckless than was good for him or he would ever voluntarily do.

Unfortunately he had also guessed very early that there was nothing he could do about it and it was all due to the manipulations and plans of one Albus Dumbledore. There was nothing to do but play along and hope to survive.

Then when he had finally found the kitchen at Hogwarts he had been spotted by a house elf. Afterwards, the elf had appeared to Harry while he was sleeping and had introduced himself. "My name is Snappy" he said, "and I is an elf bonded to a House in this school which you is an heir to. Snappy is forbidden to tell you which House you is heir to because bad Headmaster forbids all Hogwarts elves other than Dobby to talk to Harry Potter unless he is with his Weasley and/or his Grangy."

Naturally Harry had asked why and Snappy told him many secrets, including the one where once Harry saw Snappy and looked at him, Snappy was free to contact him and offer his help while he was at

Hogwarts.

One of the things had been that although Dobby was a good elf and worshipped Harry Potter, to be able to work at Hogwarts and be near him, he had to obey orders of Dumbledore and "watch Harry Potter and tell Headmaster all of Harry Potter's requests or else Dobby will be kicked out of Hogwarts and lose his magic."

However, Snappy said that while Harry was at Hogwarts he could, would and was even obligated to help and obey Harry Potter. The only thing he was not able to tell him was which House he was the heir to because once again Dumbledore had ordered it. Since he was the Headmaster Snappy had to obey him in some things but not all. The only clue Snappy gave him was that contrary to popular belief and rumor (circulated by James Potter) Harry was NOT the heir of Gryffindor.

So being very, very careful, Snappy helped Harry during his Hogwarts years. It was only after Dumbledore's death that Snappy could truly bond with Harry and become his personal elf and he did so. It had been Snappy who told Harry about the other Potter vaults, some of Dumbledore's plans for Harry, the charms, hexes, blocks, etc. that Dumbledore had placed on Harry and the real blood wards which had been placed on Privet Drive, which were not due to "Lily's sacrifice" as everyone was told. That was something else that Harry had long ago figured out for himself.

Therefore, after Dumbledore's death and before Harry was "rescued" by the Order on his 17th birthday, Snappy had snuck Harry out to clandestine meetings with Ragnok the Head Goblin at Gringotts. The Potter account manager Goblin had been abusing his position and keeping Harry ignorant of his wealth and status for years as he was being heavily bribed by Dumbledore to do so. Ragnok knew but swore he couldn't act without the proper proof and an official request by Harry to begin an investigation.

With Dumbledore's death, Ragnok moved quickly, had the traitorous account manager "taken care of" as secretly as possible and arrangements had been made for Harry to be taken directly to Gringotts and Ragnok's office as soon as he could "escape" after he turned 17. It had been tricky to do especially since he was, as usual, almost a prisoner at the Weasleys and was constantly watched but with Ragnok's and Snappy's help, it was done.

Since he had all of the charms, blocks, etc. removed, had the illegal potions flushed out of his system â€“ such as the love potions he knew he was being given the past year, he was "Dumbledore-free" and therefore was able to claim the Potter lordship which his own father had been denied by his father due to James being "sworn to Dumbledore" and because Charlus Potter knew his only son was going to be duped into giving most, if not all of the great Potter wealth, the Wizengamot vote, and who knows what else into the hands of Albus Dumbledore.

Instead Charlus had basically disowned James and merely kept giving his son the G25,000 year allowance he had been given and saved the Potter wealth for Harry to get if he passed the "requirements" set forth in Charlus' Will. If Harry wasn't "eligible" meaning he had sworn allegiance to Dumbledore he would get it after passing certain tests and swearing certain oaths. If not Harry, then any offspring he

had would be given the same opportunity. However, arrangements had been made that neither Dumbledore nor any of his minions could or ever would get their hands on the Potter heritage.

It had taken long after Harry had set off on the Horcrux hunt for Snappy, acting as his official representative as his bonded elf, to move large amounts of the Potter wealth and heirlooms to other Gringotts vaults and even some Muggle banks so that the wealth was protected from Voldemort, his Death Eaters (like Lucius Malfoy), the Ministry and most especially any and all members of the Order of the Phoenix â€“ especially the Weasleys - from getting their claws on it.

Therefore, by the time Harry, Hermione and Ron had "robbed Bellatrix's vault" much of Harry's inheritance was safely out of Britain and thus when he was heavily fined for theft and ruining the Goblins' reputation, he was able to pay the fine, still have money in his Gringotts Britain branch and not had any assassins sent after him â€“ by Gringotts at least.

However, a "grateful country" and Order members â€“ led by the Weasleys â€“ were frantically looking for him and not for the reasons that were being publically said.

Meanwhile, Harry, Snappy, Winky and her twin girl babies (she and Dobby had gotten married and had a rare set of elfin twins) were all comfortably living in America where Harry was finishing up his magical education and was attending an excellent Muggle university.

He had had six happy, peaceful years to recover from his ordeals â€“ namely, the Dursleys, Voldemort, Order of the Phoenix, Dumbledore and the fickle magical population of Britain. He had gone through intensive physical healing in both his worlds taking potions to cure the abuse from the Dursleys, Muggle plastic surgery to get rid of his scar and several other scars compliments of the Dursleys, Harry hunting and his time at Hogwarts such as the basilisk bite.

He even managed to make a few "friends" on his own and had dated several girls â€“ good looking ones with decent personalities and no objectives other than having a good time with a nice, good-looking guy. They were nothing like Hermione, definitely not Ginny or Cho.

For the first time in his life he could be "himself" or at least the "self" that he would have been had he been given the chance. Apparently he had a good personality, a good sense of humor (although he DID NOT AND WOULD NOT PRANK on principle) and was finally being accepted as the person he was and not what anybody expected him to be or to act.

He only dated one witch who didn't have a clue that he was Harry Potter and wouldn't have cared if she had as she was not what you would callâ€¦smart. She was more the Lavender Brown type of witch but she was bubbly and knew a lot of gossip, taught Harry how to really dance and to live a little.

He was also using an alias to protect his identity and privacy and one that no one would ever guess as it was nothing close to the names James, Sirius, anything Evans or with the word "son" at the end of

the surname or related to any "acceptable" wizard name.

Who would ever connect Thomas "Tommy" Andrew Roberts with Harry James Potter? No one. He had enough money to live off campus but was smart enough not to advertise it so that he would not be talked into having wild parties. Told everyone it was his uncle and aunt's place and they were away on business and he had sworn not to abuse their hospitality, etc. and anybody who didn't respect him, well they were soon dropped from his list of friends.

So Harry was finally happy, living a good life, having a wonderful time, able to excel and learn things that he enjoyed and was actually content. In other words, things were long overdue for something to go wrong and it did.

Hermione Granger had managed to track him down. Well actually she hadn't been looking for him she just accidentally ran into him while visiting the U.S. Who would have thought that Harry Potter would walk into a bookstore on the Harvard University campus?

At first she hadn't recognized him as he had changed so much not only physically but emotionally. He had confidence for the first time in his life. Even his posture had improved. No one would have recognized him and Hermione didn't. Unfortunately Harry had walked into a book store and there she was and it had been his shock and body language that had given him away, especially when he took one look at her, panicked and RAN FOR HIS LIFE.

His luck took a nose dive as one of his professors had been having a conversation with Hermione and unconsciously remarked, "Now why did Tommy Roberts run out of here like the devil was after him?"

Being nosy Hermione asked just who this Tommy Roberts was and since Tommy was one of the professor's favorite students, he gave a short but glowing report on the guy. A thought suddenly popped into Hermione's head and then, much to the shock and confusion of Professor Roger Headley, the English girl also quickly ran out of the store perhaps in hot pursuit of Tommy.

Once outside the store Hermione subtly pulled out her wand and said the "point me Harry Potter spell" and tracked him down that way. The trace led to an alley where Harry had just apparated away but the damage had been done. However, she now knew his name and it was simple to acquire his address and within a half hour a very irate Hermione had blown open the door to the Roberts residence and started screaming out Harry's name.

Mercifully Winky had been briefed and was lying in wait to stun the witch, so when Hermione was unstunned she beheld a very handsome young man whose only resemblance to the Harry Potter she had known was his ebony hair (although it had been tamed and he had a decent hair cut) and those infamous killing curse green eyes.

Still not 100% certain this was really Harry she had shouted out "HARRY JAMES POTTER I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU WANT YOU ARE GOING TO RETURN TO BRITAIN AND MARRY GINNY AND THAT'S THAT" and nothing else. Not even a "Harry is that you?" or "Harry where have you been" or "Why did you leave" or anything sensible thing.

No instead she just informed him that whether he wanted to or not he

was going to go back to Britain and marry Ginny Weasley. His reply had been "Why?"

"Because you are perfect for each other, everyone knows it, Ginny has loved you since she learned to talk, she is heart-broken you jilted her, there is a marriage contract arranged by Professor Dumbledore, you owe it to the Weasleys and Professor Dumbledore for all that they have done for you and YOU ARE A NATIONAL TREASURE AND OWE IT TO YOUR COUNTRY AND YOU WILL BE RETURNING AND FULFILLING ALL OF YOUR DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS ANDâ€|. "

"FUCK YOU GRANGER" was his reply.

This reply and the cuss word was enough to shut Hermione Granger up â€" for about a second before she began, or attempted to begin, a vicious rant about what Harry owed to Magical Britain.

Harry had no alternative but to silence her and demand that she listen to him. He knew that she would not be doing any such thing if only out of habit, but he had to try anyway.

So he told her the reasons why he had left, that he was happy and finally had a decent life and that is she was really his friend â€" and not just someone who was in charge of controlling him and reporting back everything he did to Dumbledore â€" that she would be happy for him.

"Are you happy for me Hermione?" he asked while he un-silenced her.

Apparently she was not as she just began yelling at him about all of his duties and obligations, etc. until he once again silenced her. She had also been bound to a chair as soon as possible, he had cast some strong silencing spells on the house and the elves were on alert. He then decided to ask her a few questions and then answering them for her much like she and especially Molly Weasley had always done.

"So let me guess why you are here, Hermione," he began. "Since you are snooping around Harvard you are probably in the States to do some research and perhaps find a school to continue your Muggle education, right?"

Since she couldn't answer, he continued. "No doubt you finished your seventh year at Hogwarts â€" just nod your head if you did." She nodded.

"However, despite the war and all the sacrifices, etc. nothing really changed at all did it? Bet certain Death Eaters still escaped Azkaban like the Malfoys and some other very wealthy ones, right? Maybe one or two had to serve a bit of time but still got off lightly â€" if they had money."

"Probably some people from the Order got some good jobs at the Ministry but no doubt it is still run mostly by Purebloods isn't it? Just nod your answer."

She nodded yes but glared at him for being right.

"Were you made Head Girl or did Molly demand that Ginny be given that

honor since it was her seventh year and it was your eighth? Or did someone else get that position for political reasons?"

She couldn't answer and there was no way he was going to release her until he finished asking his questions so she would get back at him by not nodding an answer.

"Ron didn't come back to school did he? Was he offered a position as an Auror or did he try to get a place on a Quidditch team, most likely the Cannons? If he got a job with the Cannons he probably didn't make it on merit and was only a reserve. If he took the Auror job I bet they made him do some training because he was too lazy and didn't study and without me training with him or you were there to nag him he flunked out, right?"

Again she glared.

"Did he by any chance write a book revealing "the truth" about the Golden Trio, how the war was won by Dumbledore, despite him being dead, and that it was Ron and definitely not me, who was the real hero although you did help in some capacity by doing research? And no, I left as soon as possible so I have no way of knowing if he did but I am just guessing all of this from what I know about Ron. Bet he also tried to reopen the Chamber and claim the basilisk carcass but couldn't because the password had been changed, right?"

The glaring continued.

"You passed your NEWTS with a very high score but by then all of the decent jobs at the Ministry were filled by incompetents and as rewards for services rendered. You had delayed looking for your parents as you wanted to finish up at Hogwarts and established your career and/or because you were afraid they would be very angry with you or that you wouldn't be able to restore their memories and it would break your heart."

By now her glare was so strong she could have lit up a city block. Damn he had probably been keeping tabs on her as there was no way that Harry could be that knowledgeable unless he had hired a detective.

"And no, I have not been keeping tabs on you as I ran and never looked back once I got out of the country."

The glare was now so bad that Harry wouldn't be surprised if steam started coming out of her ears.

"Did you and Ron really hook up and, if so, how long was it before he noticed that (1) I was gone and wasn't crying because he got you and I didn't or (2) he noticed that there were lots of witches out there who were ready, willing, able and STUPID and who wanted to show their appreciation to a real hero â€“ especially after his book came out."

Hermione closed her eyes and refused to look at him. Apparently he hit a nerve.

"Then it was suggested by probably McGonagall that while you were waiting to hear from all the places you had applied to at the Ministry and/or those who would be willing to mentor you that you

should look for your parents. So you did. Did you find them? Were they mad? Are they still in Australia? Are they speaking to you yet?"

"I gather you were not offered a decent job and then it was suggested, again probably by McGonagall, that perhaps you should do some independent study and perhaps go to a Muggle university and that is what you have been doing for the last few years. Probably got an undergrad degree and are debating whether to go for a Muggle Master's degree, enter law, or some kind of medicine â€“ but not dentistry as despite your parents being dentists you know you are better than that. You never told them that but they knew it was your opinion anyway."

"Nod if any of this is correct."

She merely continued glaring as she would not give him the satisfaction.

"Won't give me the satisfaction will you. Oh well, since you probably accidentally found me, you think that if you can take me back to Britain to fulfill my duties and obligations â€“ one of them being that I marry Ginny for all the ridiculous reasons you mentioned earlier â€“ well then you will be rewarded by being given a cushy job â€“ and one of your choosing."

The glare was still there so since he had said what he had to he figured he might as well get it over with and lift the spell so she could still ignore answering any of his questions and merely demand that he return â€“ with her â€“ back to Britain and to hell with whatever he wanted to do and abandoned the life he had made for himself and give up any and all happiness he had found.

So he did and she did exactly what he said she would say and totally ignored his wants, needs and desires. She was still in mid-rant when he suddenly yelled out "IT ISN'T GOING TO HAPPEN HERMIONE."

"OH YES IT WILL" was the snippy reply. "YOU HAVE A DUTY, AN OBLIGATION TO.â€!"

"DAMN IT. NO I DON'T. I DID WHAT I WAS FORCED INTO DOING. I SAVED ALL OF YOUR SORRY, UNGRATEFUL ASSES, RISKED MY LIFE, LIVED AS A SLAVE AND EVEN DIED. I'M DONE. THAT'S IT. IT'S OVER AND DONE WITH AND I WILL NOT GO BACK TO A LIFE OF SLAVERY â€“ NOT TO MENTION THE HELL OF MARRYING THAT FUCKING SLUT GINNY WEASLEY."

"BUT YOU LOVE HER AND SHE LOVES YOU ANDâ€!"

"DRAGON DUNG! She dosed me with love potions, probably brewed by Molly. I know. I was checked out by Gringotts. And that marriage contract Dumbledore arranged was totally illegal as he was never my legal magical guardian and the Potter Family outlawed marriage contracts in the last century."

He sighed heavily before saying, "Ginny never 'loved me' she just loved the idea of the Boy-Who-Lived and the wealth, political power and position I would inherit. You know all that wealth that I didn't know I had because Dumbledore said I wasn't allowed to know. I know you and all the Weasleys knew but I was only allowed to think that the trust vault was all I had."

"In fact, dear Hermione one of my few 'Dumbledore-approved friends'" he said sarcastically, "you knew a lot more about me than I was ever allowed to know and yetâ€|you never told me. You never told me anything of real value, things that could have not only helped me but made my life a lot easier and a lot less painful. Did Dumbledore order you not to help me or did you just not want to risk me finding out information and thus not needing you anymore? I've always wondered, so now, since we are alone, please tell me if only to solve my curiosity."

The glare was back but it was evident that Hermione was debating whether to answer this or any of his questions. He was right aboutâ€|well everything, including her fear that he would stop needing her. He really had been her only real friend and it had crushed her when he had left â€" ah escaped from them all.

"Did you ever find out if you had been potioned to 'like and/or lust after Ron' or were you threatened by him and told that if you lost his and thus his family's good will, Dumbledore would also abandon you? Was that the real reason you cried when he was 'jealous' over you going to the Yule Ball with Krum or publically snogged Lavender. Did you cry all that time when he abandoned us during the hunt because you thought you would be cast aside or because you missed him? I'd really like to know."

That did it. He had been too close to so many truths that he did not deserve any answers just orders. However, she would have to try a different approach to try and convince him into returning. Guilt had always worked before so it still should work.

"Harry, do you know how many people you disappointed when you shamelessly and selfishly abandoned us all? What about your oath as a godfather to Teddy?"

"I made arrangements long before I left regarding Teddy. If you had actually talked with Andromeda you would know. Kreacher was left to serve the last of the Blacks and you should know that," he snapped out.

Actually she had heard about the arrangements Harry had made such as leaving money and Grimmauld Place for Andromeda's and Teddy's use. It was left to Andromeda to arrange for another guardian for the boy should she die and Hermione knew that she had made careful and ironclad arrangements for her grandson's future should something happen to her.

"Professor Dumbledore must be crying in heaven since youâ€|" she started to say.

"Who says Dumbles made heaven," he snarled back as he once again silenced her to get a word in. "Albus Dumbledore was no saint and if some of the things he did, the way he manipulated and/or ruined lives are ever revealed his name will be just as blackened and despised as Voldemort's."

Harry was really getting mad now and he let his temper show. "Some of the things he did to me â€" to my parents, Sirius, Remus and probably even to you are unconscionable. There can be no forgiveness or excuses given even if it was done for the 'mysterious Greater Good' a

phrase constantly used but never truly explained as Albus Dumbledore felt he neither owed nor need to give an explanation to anyone if only because he was Albus Dumbledore."

During school Hermione would have argued with Harry or anyone had they said such a thing, but in the years after the war so many things had become clearer and once again Harry was correct.

"I gather old Dumbles didn't leave any instructions regarding your future in our world did he? One would think that at least Minnie would have mentored you, looked after you, saw to your future as you were, it was said, one of her favorite students in our generation. But she didn't did she? She just advised you to look for your parents and get some Muggle education. How often have you heard from her since you left Hogwarts?"

Since she was still silenced she mouthed the words, "We correspond on a regular basis."

"How? Do you exchange Christmas cards or long, gossipy letters full of interesting information and witticisms on a regular basis?" He then took pity and un-silenced her as the look on her face spoke volumes.

"We exchange Christmas cards and a letter is always enclosed. She was delighted when I found my parents and very sympathetic when I wasn't accepted into any mastery programs."

She then bit down on her lip signifying that she was thinking, trying to make a decision. She then looked up at Harry and he saw what looked like the beginning of tears forming in her cinnamon brown eyes.

"It wasn't as if she didn't want to help me, it was that she couldn't. There were too many old guard Purebloods still in the Ministry andâ€|Mollyâ€|she feltâ€|her family deserved more than they had received. Molly was lashing out and making unreasonable demands. She still hasn't gotten over the loss of Fred â€" not that losing a child is something you ever get over. She blamed you, or at least she did after you disappeared and were not around to marry Ginny. She had her heart set on you two marrying."

"Kingsley was trying so hard to fix things, to make changes so that all of those who died did not die in vain. But you know Molly. She is the mother of Bill, Percy, George and Ron and Kingsley had need of them and Arthur to help him. To shut her up heâ€|well he appointed her to a few committees andâ€|wellâ€|" she faltered.

"Give someone a little bit of power and they abuse it," he answered for her.

"Oh yes. That was exactly what happened. To get her away from the Ministry he appointed her as a Ministry representative toâ€|"

"HOGWARTS?"

"Unfortunately, yes," came the reply. "Professor McGonagall became the permanent Headmistress â€" a job she did deserve â€" but Mollyâ€|well, you know her."

"Let me guess. She became the new Umbridge and wanted to rule over everything. She gave her opinion about how such and such a thing should be done and was furious if she wasn't obeyed. She fought McG tooth and nail and caused as much trouble as possible when she didn't get her way and her way was probably the worst thing that could be done."

"Since when did you get so wise, Harry Potter?"

"I've always been 'wise' Hermione Granger but people just ignored me, belittled me, treated me badly and/or as a young child and my opinion never counted. That doesn't mean I couldn't think or wasn't intelligent, only that I wasn't. I didn't count or matter much in the scheme of things now did I?"

She hung her head down in shame.

"So who got to be Head Girl?"

"I did, but Professor McGonagall suffered for supporting me. That was the first thing they 'discussed' and Molly lost. The first year after the war things were horrible. Parvati said it was almost as bad as when the Death Eaters ruled the school. Eventually Molly was appointed to another position at the Ministry to pacify her. She was in charge of running an orphanage."

"Well she must have loved that."

"It was for the children of Death Eaters who had been killed in the war, were sent to Azkaban or managed to flee the country leaving their families behind."

"Oh those poor kids."

"Exactly. However, she did 'convince' Percy to use his influence when people were being considered for one of the very few decent jobs at the Ministry."

"And your applications were immediately filed in the wastebasket, lost or simply vanished?"

"Something like that."

"Any reason given?"

"Not really," came the sad reply.

"You were right you knowâ€|about Ron threatening me with being abandoned. You were also correct that he loss interest in me almost immediately when you left and when girls started vying for his attentions. I must admit, at least now I'll admit it, that we didn't start dating as the only real thing we ever had in common wasâ€|"

"Me. And you were Gryffindors, working for Dumbledore regarding me."

"Harryâ€|about that," she began hesitantly. "I really thought I was helping you. Professor Dumbledore told me that youâ€|needed help. I

was helping him help and watching over you. I was protecting you from bad influences, helping to keep you on the path of the Light, keeping away people who only wanted to use you and other things. But I always did like you â€" like the brother I never had. I really did try to help and protect you, I really did."

Of course then she broke down in tears and Harry didn't like seeing her crying so he left her there â€" still bound in the chair â€" while he went to fetch tea and sandwiches. He didn't want her to know that he had elves for many reasons, the least being just in case she tried to stun him and drag him back to Britain. Of course he had taken her wand away but that wouldn't completely stop the wily Hermione Granger.

He brought in the tea tray, set it on a table and unbound her arms. Her legs were still bound to the chair much to her obvious displeasure but she should be grateful she was getting tea and sympathy.

He asked after a few people like Luna and Neville, Dean, Seamus and others. She had lost touch with most of their classmates and when she went to university she did not get the Daily Prophet so she didn't know any gossip.

"I felt so hurt and abandoned, especially after I sacrificed so much for our world. I did find out while at school what the fate of most Muggleborns were and that was why I tried so hard to prove myself, to 'help' Professor Dumbledore, to make myself indispensable. But despite all that I did and the excellent grades I earned, the dedication and contributions I could make, I ended up like most Muggleborns. I left and went back to the Muggle world."

"Are you over here to study or to try and get a job at the American Ministry?"

"A bit of both. You were correct about my parents being angry with me and looking back on it now and from their point of view, I treated them very badly. But when Professor Dumbledore told you to do somethingâ€|well you know you just did it because it was him who was telling you and wellâ€|he was all wise and all knowingâ€|"

"And the biggest bastard in the last century or two. Like I said earlier, if only you knew some of the things that I knew then and have found out sinceâ€|well you wouldn't be giving him the title of respect of 'Professor' or 'Headmaster' but would probably be calling him a few other nasty but more deserved names, none of which should be said in polite company."

"Well I did go to school and got a dual degree in English/Pre-Law and Science. I'm considering law or perhaps medical research. It all depends on my parents. I used my university fund they had started for me when I was born to fund my education. There is still a bit left but not enough for a graduate degree. I had a lot of expenses because I had to find a place to live, study and then take entrance tests. I also had to pay tuition to attend my seventh year at Hogwarts â€" unlike some people whose tuition was waived."

"Ginny?"

"Oh yes, Ginny because she was considered a hero for the war work she

did at Hogwarts â€“ although Neville and others did most of it. That was the reason Molly was demanding she be made Head Girl. Professor McGonagall did one other good thing â€“ she made Neville Head Boy."

"Fantastic! She actually did the right thing for once."

Hermione was going to object but then thought better of it.

"You know there were so many things she wanted to do different throughout our years at school but _Dumbledore _overrode her in most things for the 'Greater Good.' She had made you Prefect but then Dumbledore said that Ron was going to be Prefect as youâ€|weren't proper Prefect material."

"And Ron was? Ha, that wasn't what Dumbles told me. Gave me some bull that he knew I was going to have too much going on or some such garbage. Of course he had arranged for or let the garbage happen with me being used, abused, abandoned, screwed, fighting Voldie, etc. You know the usual. Neville would have made a great Prefect and it might have given him some self-confidence."

"Well it is all in the past and we can do nothing to change it," Hermione said. "There was nothing we or anybody could do about most things, including getting a good education. I went to Canada the summer between my first and second year at university as I wanted to see if I could apply for a Mastery there. Imagine my surprise when Iâ€| "

"Found out that you had received a substandard education at Hogwarts and would have to take remedial courses in Canada before you could even get a job."

"Exactly. It's the same thing here isn't it?"

"Yes, but I haven't taken any official courses. I've done some private studying and could probably take the American equivalent of NEWTS and pass them, but right now I'm concentrating on my Mundane education as it is called here. I don't think I'll ever take my NEWTS as I don't want a magical job, just the knowledge of magic."

There was a few moments spent in silence for thinking and munching on the sandwiches and small pastries Harry served, but it is rarely silent for long when Hermione Granger wants information.

"So you would not even consider returning to Britain?"

"Why are you planning on kidnapping me, dragging me back and being rewarded for services rendered," he asked with bitterness in his voice.

She bit her bottom lip again before saying, "Honestly, when I first saw you that was all I thought. It MIGHT earn me some points butâ€|I couldn't live with myself if I did."

"And you still wouldn't get a decent job now would you," he added.

"No, I probably wouldn't. And you and a lot of other people would hate me."

"And deservedly so," he added.

"I know. It's a reflex reaction left over from Dumbledore. However, people are still looking for you and I'm surprised you haven't been found."

"Have they offered a monetary reward? I mean a bounty hunter might find me."

"The last I heardâ€|no. They wanted you found but I don't think that money was actually mentioned. Personally I think it was because there wasn't any extra money."

"You mean they didn't squeeze money out of the Death Eaters, confiscate estates, things like that?"

"Well they did confiscate some estates and accepted 'donations' for St. Mungo's and the rebuilding of Hogwarts. There was so much that needed rebuilding and then the orphanage was going to be founded â€" but in the end it wasn't and Molly was furious. The economy still hasn't recovered and many people had been sneaking money out of the country to either escape from the Death Eaters or the Death Eaters were making contingency plans just in case they lost."

"Also, so many people were lost either through death, injury or grief over losing their loved ones. Things are really bad and that is probably why they were looking for you. You know, to use as a symbol of hope. To give encouragement to the lost andâ€|"

"Confiscate my wealth by declaring me a dark lord is more likely. I could see me being put on trial for that, or even being sued because I took too long to finish Voldie off. How many people do you think are blaming me for the death of a friend or family member? Am I being blamed for Fred's death?"

The lip was being bitten again which meant that yes, he was probably right about the things he had just opined.

"When you went missingâ€|well Ron started blaming you for Fred but didn't give a 'real reason' but that's Ron. Then Ginny started crying, complaining and cursing your name and Molly threw her two knuts in andâ€|yes. They did once you were gone."

"And they couldn't make me marry Ginny or guilt me into giving them condolence or blood restitution money, etc. I bet a lot of people were going to try and do that especially when they found out that I had lots and lots of money."

"I knew there would be people thinking 'well he saved us again but he didn't do it in time to save poor Granny. Now if he had done it right the first time, none of this would have happened soâ€|that Half-blood son of a Mudblood whore owes us something for all our trouble and pain'."

"I doubt they would go so far as to call you that."

"Uh yeah, they would and some actually did. I have an account with Gringotts outside of Britain and since I paid large fees to keep my secrets and ensure my safety, I have been alerted that several people

had approached Gringotts Britain with the intention of demanding blood restitution money because of my 'not defeating Voldie in a reasonable amount of time.'"

"Surely you are joking."

"Nope. Five suits were filed against me for this time and one for not doing the 'job' properly the first time _**when I was a 15 month old baby**_. They were dismissed â€" by the Goblins â€" but I was warned that if I ever returned to Britain, I could and probably would be taken to trial before the Wizengamot to answer and defend myself against these charges."

"The Weasleys did officially file a lawsuit against me for breach of contract. Told the Goblins they had been misled by Dumbles and as far as they were concerned it was a legitimate contract and if I didn't marry Ginny and they couldn't get money from my account, then Dumbledore's estate should pay damages to them."

"Apparently all of the money he was able to squeeze from various donations and gifts sent to me c/o him went into a special account and there was the Order account under his name. It was a very tidy sum according to Ragnok and the Weasleys wanted to be paid out of that."

"But that's impossible! They would never do such a thing especially to Dumbledore and the Order."

"Au contraire mon cher, they would and did. It was about three years ago so you were out of the loop. I heard they lost and had made a few enemies â€" important enemies."

"I still find it hard to believe they would go that far."

Now Harry was getting annoyed. Despite all that had happened since they both had entered the Magical World, their school years, the war, the aftermath and the treatment she had personally received and yet _she still couldn't believe_ that the likes of Molly, Ron and Ginny Weasley wouldn't be capable of doing such a thing.

"Hermione why can't you believe the Weasleys being capable of doing such a thing?"

"Wellâ€¦because they are Light wizards, supported Professor Dumbledore completely, fought in the war for the Light and lost poor Fred. And they all loved you. Molly considered you her seventh son and Ronâ€¦"

"Was Ron and you KNOW DAMN WELL WHAT RON WAS LIKE," he snarled back at her.

She looked shocked at his outburst and perhaps a bit confused and this served to infuriate Harry.

"Harry, what's wrong? All I said wasâ€¦"

"I know what I said Hermione," he spat out. "After all I am here talking with you. I am the one who was informed by Gringotts about the lawsuits not you who hadn't even heard about it. Yet you, after living, experiencing and observing all of the things that have

happened " TO ME " and have personally witnessed and experienced things that the Weasleys have done to you yet you still find it hard to believe ill of them._ ARE YOU STUPID?"

"HARRY JAMES POTTER YOU KNOW PERFECTLY WELL THAT I AM AN EXTREMELY INTELLIGENT." "

He silenced her and then rebound her arms after she had grabbed a muffin and thrown it at him.

Then it was his turn to glare at her and to receive her angry glare in return. Should he even bother talking with her or should he just oblige her and spell her into going back to where she came and never returning.

Oh well this probably wouldn't accomplish anything but it would be the only chance he ever got to tell her " someone other than a house elf or Goblin " about his life. She probably wouldn't listen or understand but at least he would get a chance to say his peace.

"Hermione you might be an intelligent person and earned good grades but you are suffering from a Wizarding disease and don't know it. What disease you are asking? I'll tell you. Here in the States it is called 'confundus wizarditis' and is most often found among British wizards. Muggleborns don't have it until they are exposed to it and then most come down with it. There is no actual cure but once diagnosed, carefully explained and accepted by the victim it can be monitored and controlled to some extent and its progression slowed."

This got her attention since it was an American diagnosed disease which was probably the reason she hadn't heard about it she since was still living in Britain. Actually, it wasn't an official validated disease just a running joke about British Magicals and their total lack of common sense. If Harry ever got around to doing it, he would see that it was listed as a certifiable malady common to British wizards but for the moment all that Hermione needed to know was that it existed and then she could research it.

"Now I know you are thinking that I might be making it up because you never heard about it and are only going to listen to me to 'humor' me and once you escape my clutches you will research it to prove me wrong or catch me in a lie, correct? Of course I'm correct."

She agreed with him by glaring at him so he continued.

"A wizard is usually born with it whereas a Muggleborn acquires it once they start at Hogwarts. Basically it is the gradual loss of any common sense a Muggleborn was born with and before you increase your glare, I can produce facts to back up what I am saying. I will use your life as an example of the onset of the disease beginning with you finding out you were a witch and continuing through your first year at Hogwarts."

"It started with the receipt of your Hogwarts letter and when McG showed up and lured you into attending Hogwarts. Knowing you, you asked a multitude of questions all at once and didn't give McG the chance to answer one before you asked another " like you ALWAYS DO " and then you probably didn't notice, due to your excitement, that

she didn't answer the majority of them."

She had to admit " to herself " that was what had happened.

"Then you go to Diagon Alley and get your things especially books to find out as much as you can about this new exciting world. I bet you made your parents take you back to buy a lot more books because McG wouldn't let you stay and browse as much as you wanted to and she was hoping that you wouldn't look for more information. I bet your parents spent a fortune the second time and every year thereafter, correct? I'm also willing to bet that you snuck to Diagon Alley to buy books prior to you _**officially**_ doing your shopping with the Weasleys."

How did Harry know she did all of these things? _**She knew**_ he didn't have the ability to learn Occlumency and would have been too lazy to learn on his own (but he did and he wasn't and he had but she would never believe it) so he couldn't be reading her mind especially since she hadn't been thinking about it since she arrived here. So how was he doing this? It would never occur to her that it was because he knew her so well and how she thought.

"You learned as much as you could over the years and I had guess by second year and then found out from others over the years that Dumbles had given you a secret pass to the Restricted Section of the Library so you could better 'help me' and as a reward for giving this help. You found out more information than most students because of this but you never did have access to books which really could have helped you because, from what I learned later, anything really, really helpful, interesting or important was not only removed from the main library but also the Restricted Section and placed in Dumbles' private library for 'security reasons' it was said."

"Now a Muggleborn like you or Justin Finch-Fletchley would do extra research to have the answers they sought or would ask questions of the Purebloods and Half-bloods. Justin probably got many of his questions answered but the only Purebloods or Half-bloods you had access to " or in other words would speak to you - were Gryffindors, namely the Weasleys and _you must have known_ that they were not giving you a lot of the information you requested and not because they didn't know. They did know but Dumbles didn't want you to know certain things and the Weasleys didn't either so that they could retain their feelings of superiority over you, a mere Muggleborn."

"Muggleborns like Dean Thomas weren't all that interested and if he did have a question about something he asked Seamus. I bet Dean knew more things than you did about certain things because Seamus or Neville told him. I found out things by hiding under the cloak and just 'blending in the background' when people didn't know I was around. In other words Dean wasn't all that interested in learning about Purebloods and most magical traditions because that was how Dumbledore had it set up. He didn't want Muggleborns to know all the things they should about the Magical World and just so you know, that was one of the reasons for Voldie starting the war BUT SINCE YOU WON'T LISTEN I WON'T GO INTO IT BECAUSE YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME."

He was right as she would never believe such a thing especially as it was Harry who was telling her. Others had tried to talk to her about

this and she wouldn't believe them as she had never found any books anywhere with this information in the Hogwarts Library or for sale at Flourish and Blotts. The books which "neutral" Slytherins like Daphne Greengrass had shown her, well she just "considered the source" and from whom the books were coming from and therefore, such books were simply Pureblood propaganda and thus totally worthless.

Once Luna Lovegood loaned her a scrapbook from the Quibbler's archives of news clippings from some 1950s Daily Prophets when a wizard named Tom Riddle was running for political office. He had written a series of articles for the Op Ed page which outlined what he stood for.

Hermione had read them and had admitted only that they were well-written BUT, as she informed Luna, they were works of fiction as Professor Dumbledore had personally told her exactly what Voldemort stood for and anything else was a pack of lies. She went on to insult Luna, her father and the Quibbler and had smugly said "As usual, your father has gotten his 'facts' wrong and these so-called excerpts from the Prophet are probably forgeries as anyone with a brain and a lick of common sense can tell just by reading the contents."

Naturally Luna was hurt as well as highly insulted as Hermione â€“ who was supposedly a friend â€“ should be grateful to read a historical account and something which showed a different perspective than what was being printed in the "official Ministry (and Dumbledore)-approved" history books. A fight had started and Hermione lost her temper, accused Luna of protecting her "traitorous, insane, fool of a father and his inane ramblings" and the next thing she knew she had thrown the scrapbook into the fireplace and then prevented Luna from rescuing it.

"It's for your own good you little fool as it was nothing but Pureblood trash and lies and shouldn't be used for anything else but fire fodder."

Luna had never spoken to her again and neither had Neville, Daphne Greengrass and Madame Pince. The Librarian had been outraged that Hermione had destroyed a historical record and had tried to have her banned from the Library. That was the last time Molly Weasley ever supported Hermione in anything as "Dark, evil, wicked books should all be burned" as far as Molly was concerned.

Hermione had blanked out thinking about this incident until Harry got her attention back by sending a mild stinging hex her way. That done he continued with his rant.

"Other symptoms are disinterest, extreme naivetÃ©, confusion, extreme loyalty and failure to believe what your own eyes tell you. Instead you believe anything that is told to you by a person in authority despite concrete evidence standing before you."

"Hermione why did you never ask me why I dressed like I did, why I limped a lot when returning to Hogwarts for a new year, why I looked like I hadn't had a decent meal in ages and why I truly hated living with the Dursleys? Surely you noticed something had to be wrong with my home life yet you never asked. I admit I probably wouldn't have told you because I had been severely conditioned â€“ or rather threatened â€“ 'not to tell' but you could have asked. I never

remember you asking me about my home life and you ALWAYS NAGGED ME UNTIL I TOLD YOU ABOUT OTHER THINGS so why not my home life?"

She didn't meet his eyes so he continued.

"Was it because Dumbles told you I was "making a fashion statement or just too hard on clothes and didn't care how I looked" or that I was very accident prone and was constantly injuring myself or I WAS STARTING FIGHTS WITH DUDLEY AND HIS ENTIRE GANG AND THEY WERE MERELY DEFENDING THEMSELVES? Was I just a picky eater during the summer solely to annoy the Dursleys who I had been constantly rebelling against since I started living with them as a BABY?"

"Was it always MY FAULT that the poor Dursleys had to punish me - severely? Was I too lazy to do my homework â€“ much like at school even though I didn't have Ron to distract me at the Dursleys? Did he and thus you agree with Snape that I was lazy, arrogant, indifferent and below average in intelligence to do well in my school work? Surely you noticed it was Ron who forced me to goof off when I tried to do my homework or study since you were always there to witness it, isn't that right?"

She had to look at him as he was now standing nose-to-nose with her and he was still talking and she was still incapable of interrupting him or changing the subject. At least she didn't have to give him answers.

"So tell me Hermione â€“ not that you would if you could at the moment â€“ but how did you rationalize to yourself that despite all of the physical proof standing in front of you all of those years did you totally ignore my condition and listened to and believed only what Dumbledore told you to believe."

"Therefore you are either suffering from a serious case of confundus wizarditis or you are just as bad, patronizing and uncaring as the Weasleys, the Ministry, Dumbledore, all Hogwarts teachers, all members of the Order of the Phoenix , 99.90% of the Hogwarts student body and the entire population of Magical Britain. Which is it?"

He was still nose-to-nose with her and showing no signs of letting her answer. But he was not finished and kept talking.

"I will unsilence you but you have to NOT INTERRUPT ME and only answer the questions I ask you. If you do that, I will let you reply to my other questions, although I already know that you will not and merely use the opportunity to chastise me just like you have done ever since I've known. Yes I know you feel insulted but if you are honest you will have to admit that is what you have been intending to do all along, isn't it? Well here goes nothing."

"This will be a quiz entitled "How well do I know Harry Potter" and I will ask a question and you will answer the question only or I will silence you again and lock you in the basement for a week. He then lifted the spell but quickly asked, "What is my favorite color?"

"Are you crazy? How dare you threaten me? Just wait until I getâ€|"

"Okay basement here comes Hermione UNLESS YOU ANSWER MY QUESTIONS.

Now what is my favorite color?"

"Red."

"No, not even close."

"Of course it's red. Everybody knows it is red."

"Well if everybody knows it is red they are wrong because NO ONE EVER ASKED ME WHAT MY FAVORITE COLOR WAS. Therefore how does _**everybody **_know that it is red?"

"Well it is just a given that it is red becauseâ€|"

"Because I am a Gryffindor? Well you are a Gryffindor and your favorite color is bright yellow. Ron's is orange and Ginny favors purple but her mother hates that color so won't let her wear it or decorate her room in purple."

"Howâ€|how did you know I like bright yellow?"

"Because you told me â€" and Ron â€" and I've heard you mention it to Parvati and Lavender and at least twice to Ginny. You don't wear it because you don't like how you look in it but it is still your favorite color because it is bright and cheerful."

She was shocked that he remembered or even knew she had told others. Ron would have no idea and she had had to tell Ginny twice because Ginny didn't care to remember.

"What is my favorite dessert?"

"Now that's easy as everybody does know that it is treacle tart."

"Well 'everybody' is wrong."

"Harry, you ate it all of the time so it is obvious that youâ€|"

"I ate it all of the time because it is usually on the Hogwarts menu and Molly decided that it is my favorite and thus always serves it and tells people â€" including me â€" that it is my favorite. Actually it is a good thing to put potions into due to its consistency and sweetness so it hides the taste of the potion. Whenever it is served at Hogwarts, it is the only decent thing to eat because usually it is served with bland Jell-O, tinned fruit cocktail that is too sweet and one dish of something really good that Ron or the Twins grab before anyone else can hence the only thing left is treacle tart."

"Next question, what is my favorite holiday â€" AND DON'T YOU DARE SAY HALLOWEEN?"

"Erâ€|Christmas?"

"Nope. Next question. What is my favorite Quidditch team?"

"Harry I fail to see why any of this is necessary?"

"I told you to find out how much you really know about me? So what

team do I like?"

"You know I don't follow Quidditch and the only names I know are the Cannons and that all girl team Ginny always wanted to play for."

"What about my favorite Muggle football team?"

"Now you are being ridiculous."

"I've said it often enough â€“ in your presence â€“ because Dean and I are always trying to interest people in football. I bet Parvati or Lavender would know."

"Well I don't and I don't care and this is still ridiculous. What I really want to know isâ€!"

"And it comes back to 'what Hermione wants' or 'what Dumbledore wants' or 'the Weasleys want this or that' but it's never what Harry wants. So answer my questions."

"You did notice â€“ although I doubt it â€“ that not only do you not know the answers but you haven't bothered to ask for the real answer. Of course that is typical because you really don't give a damn about me or what I think, want or like, just like the rest of Magical Britain."

"Why does it matter?"

"And there we have it. It doesn't matter because no one cares about Harry Potter."

"Stop being so dramatic and justâ€!"

"NO YOU STOP IT. You just said a while ago that _ 'I always did like you â€“ like the brother I never had. I really did try to help and protect you, I really did'_ but you and the majority of the others don't. YOU JUST DON'T CARE, NEVER HAVE AND NEVER WILL and yet you wonder why I left."

Now she felt guilty â€“ but just a bit. If it had been any other person saying this to her she would have been ashamed, but it was Harry. She did really like â€“ no love â€“ him like a brother, but he never understood anything. Professor Dumbledore had explained it to her many times and impressed upon her that Harry was incapable of understanding his destiny or his place in the scheme of things. He just wasn't all thatâ€|intelligent. Plus he was selfish and was a typical boy, then a typical teenage boy, etc. Hermione understood it and even Ron did (and Ron was an idiot) but Harry didn't and never would. How was she going to make him understand and see the reasons why his life had had to have been mapped out by those, like Dumbledore, who knew what was best for Harry and the world?

Then she had an idea which just might work and free her. If she was free she could easily overpower Harry because she had been taking Muggle defense lessons and he wouldn't be expecting her to use Muggle tactics.

"Harry I have to pee â€“ really, really bad."

"And you want me to unbind you?"

"Well how else am I going to be able to use the loo? Plus I think I will also be doing another bodily function, so unless you have turned into a certified sadist and want to risk me messing in your chair!" she said coyly and as innocently as possible.

"Okay, I'll take care of it," he replied.

She then felt a strange tingle in her nether regions and asked, "What did you do?"

"I used a charm Madame Pomfrey taught me. If you ever noticed there were no bedpans in the Infirmary. If you could you used the loo but if not, Pomfrey spelled the patient. I was there a lot if you will recall and it seemed a good idea to learn a few healing spells. I just used it on you to 'take care of your problem' and no, you did not have to do another bodily function."

"HOW DARE YOU?"

"To save my chair. Now what is my favorite entrée?"

A now very angry Hermione yelled out in frustration, "Harry James Potter STOP THIS NONSENSE AT ONCE. I am not going to sit here listening to your whining, being insulted and, and have unauthorized and unnecessary spells done on me. This is outrageous and I will not tolerate it any longer. NOW RELEASE ME AT ONCE!"

"Okay."

"Well do it then."

"I will but not before I obliviate you."

"WHAT? YOU CAN'T DO THAT. IT'S ILLEGAL."

"Just watch me" he said with a nasty smile on his face.

This scared the hell out of her. This was Harry and he'd probably damage her if he tried to obliviate her. She could lose her mind.

But before she could scream out her frustration and fears Harry smiled wider and announced, "Before I do that I have one more question to ask you."

"Well I'm not going to answer it."

"Okay, then I'll just obliviate!"

"Alright, alright, ask your question."

"You were about to say 'ask your stupid question weren't you?'

She stayed silent while he just sighed.

"Just as I thought so here's my last question. Why do you think I am stupid? And be truthful."

"Well," she began, "becauseâ€|wellâ€|."

"Dumbledore told you so."

She swallowed noticeably before replying, "Yes. But he was correct because your scholastic history proved it."

"Dragon dung," came the reply. "You know that I am not becauseâ€|well you just know it."

"Harry, you are being ridiculous. I've seen your work, checked it, corrected it and if I hadn't you would have flunked. Even Ron was smarter than you but he was just too lazy to do the work. You just don't have the proper.â€|"

Without warning Harry hit Hermione with the strongest stinging hex he knew â€" and he had done a lot of research and practice in his private studying so combined with his magical power this hex was the closest you could get to a Crucio without actually doing one. It stopped her talking but not screaming.

Fortunately Harry lived in a single home with a yard large enough so that his neighbors would not hear normal screams as well as having several powerful silencing charms cast on the house. Had he not the neighbors might now be calling the police thinking someone was being murdered. Had Harry not had the charms cast and Hermione bound to a chair then it would be necessary for his neighbors to call the police because the next thing he would be telling Hermione would have had her killing him had she been unbound.

"Hermione I know you know that I am not stupid becauseâ€|well remember when Ron abandoned us during the hunt and you were upset and crying and I'd make you a nice cup of tea to calm you down? Well I spiked it with Veritaserum and found out a lot of interesting things."

"WHAT? No you didn't as I'd remember and there is no wayâ€|."

"Well I did do it and did it three times and then taught myself how to do an obliviation so that's why you neverâ€|."

It had been wise of Harry to move away from Hermione before he told her this otherwise the volume of her screeches would have left him temporarily deaf. She screamed, screeched and yelled so long and loud that had she entered a yelling match competing against the likes of Molly Weasley, a banshee, a fly-over of a jet fighter squadron or a magical thunderbird descending in full attack mode, she probably would have won.

She was also turning several different shades of red, purple and various darkish blues that Vernon Dursley would have envied. Harry couldn't help himself and started laughing uncontrollably and couldn't stop. This only made her angrier and she began to promise pain, agony and "righteous retribution" (it would be righteous because she would be the one doing it) that would make a Death Eater run for it.

This continued until Harry finally got control of himself and silenced her. It was good because she really needed to stop and calm

down before Harry would be obliged to take her to a hospital for having a potentially terminal conniption.

"You can believe what you want and yell all you want but I am a fast learner and your brain wasn't turned to mush, etc. but I did what I had to do because it was the only way I could get the answers I needed to survive. So you don't feel too bad I did the same to Ron after he returned â€“ I always spelled you asleep so you didn't notice."

"I will add that Ron Weasley was lucky to still be alive after I found out some of the things he had done, knew about and was planning to do to me personally or watch while others did it. That was yet another reason why I left and will NEVER BE RETURNING."

"Back to what I found out from you, you confessed that you thought I might have potential despite what Dumbles told you but that your job was to make sure I passed my courses but not to try to excel at anything other than Quidditch and perhaps Charms. You also feared that if I ever did manage to dump Ron and buckle down and study and put an effort into my homework that I might not need you anymore."

"You noticed that I could think fast on my feet in an emergency and despite the fact that Ron always beat me in chess I had the potential to plan strategy. Therefore you were the brains of the Golden Trio, Ron was the 'strategist' and 'bodyguard' and I was the '_Boy-Who-Lived who had a destiny that must be fulfilled'_ but Dumbledore would never tell you as you didn't have the need to know if only for safety reasons."

Had she been able Hermione would have hung her head in shame. Apparently Harry had given her Veritaserum and successfully obliterated her to know this specific information without her realizing it. She wanted to ask what else he had found out but knew that he would not tell her. Perhaps if she listened to him, answered a few questions she would then be able to ask him and hopefully he would tell her. There were some things she hoped that no one, especially Harry, would ever find out.

"But what do you really know about me? You ignored the simple questions I asked and you have even stated that you don't want to know because it isn't necessary. However, just to annoy you the answers are teal, trifle, Guy Fawkes Day, the Falmouth Falcons and Manchester United."

Hermione just stared.

"Not that you want to know but I've always liked blues and greens. Yes, I know it is considered a mortal sin for a Gryffindor to like the color green, but I do and I do have green eyes which girls â€“ American, Canadian and Hispanic girls â€“ tell me are beautiful and my best feature. I really like teal and have a lot of teal-colored clothes and household accessories of that color. In case you haven't noticed, McG wears a lot of green and she is a Gryffindor and was its Head of House."

"I adore trifle because since it was one of Dudley's favorite desserts, Petunia had me make it a lot. Since I learned how to cook beginning at the age of four â€“ to earn my keep â€“ I've done most

of the cooking at the Dursleys since I was eight. I couldn't eat most of it because I was a worthless, evil, stupid, ugly freak who didn't even deserve food, etc. but I could cook better than Petunia. On occasion I managed to lick the plates which the trifle had been served and once I learned where the Hogwarts kitchens were, I'd sneak there in the middle of the night and have a trifle orgy. I still make it but for myself and when I attend a party, that's one of the things I bring."

"Now if you are bothering to think about it â€“ which you probably aren't since it is of no relevance in your opinion â€“ but if you did you'd be asking 'why Guy Fawkes Day' as a favorite holiday. The answer is that the Dursleys made ALL holidays horrible for me. They used days like Christmas, Easter, etc. to torment me. While at Hogwarts I've had exactly two decent Christmases â€“ first year and sixth year were passable but not great."

"I like Guy Fawkes Day because although it was a minor holiday it was still a holiday and when I managed to get away from Privet Drive, it was the one day that I could go up to a stranger and ask "Penny for the Guy" and usually I received money. If Dudley or his gang didn't catch me and steal it off me, I usually made enough to buy something decent to eat or at least buy a bottle of milk as 'freaks don't deserve milk' and Dudley didn't drink it so I only got it at Mrs. Figg's house."

"The Falmouth Falcons and Manchester United â€“ well you'd have to know sports, but that is the one subject you refused to learn anything about since you consider it barbaric. You said that often enough throughout the years. But then you were terrible at sports in your primary weren't you? You tend to ignore and make fun of anything you aren't good at don't you? "

"You never played chess with Ron because he was an acknowledged expert. Even the Twins admitted it. You were afraid that if you lost to him he would never let you live it down and he wouldn't have. Of course what you and everybody didn't know was that Ron had inherited his Uncle Fabian's chess set. Remus told me all about it. It was a charmed set passed down through the Prewett Family. The owner could never lose. Remus said James tried to buy it off of him but he refused so James ratted him out to McGonagall. Someone tipped him off and he managed to hide it. He left it to Ron. If you recall he never played chess unless it was with his set."

Now that she thought of it Ron wouldn't play chess unless he had his own set. He hadn't brought it with him during the Horcrux hunt. That was her last thought before Harry yelled out "OLIVATE" and she knew no more.

Hermione Jane Granger was on the top of the world. All of her dreams had finally come true and she was now going to have a career â€“ not just a job â€“ but a career in the Magical World. All she had to do was to betray her best, and probably the only, friend she would ever have.

Harry Potter had Obliviated her after forcing her to listen to "his story" and when she didn't feel any pity for him and still insisted that he "do his duty" and honor the wishes and memory of Albus Dumbledore, the "Greatest Wizard since Merlin" and the best and most noblest example of what a wizard should be, he didn't agree.

As Professor Dumbledore always told her, Harry was too selfish and wanted to avoid the "destiny" that he had been born to. Even though Voldemort had been defeated he still had obligations to the Wizarding World which he must fulfill whether he wanted to or not. It was the duty of all of the Order of the Phoenix members but most especially Hermione to make sure that Harry Potter fulfilled those duties no matter how much he would protest. Even if he protested and especially if he "escaped" he had to be found at any cost.

And he finally had been found, captured and brought back to do those duties and it was all due to Hermione Jane Granger. Once again she had proved to be the "brightest witch of her age" and had found Harry and brought him back.

He thought he had been so smart! But despite what he had said, she believed that he wasn't really and would never be a match for her. Before she went to confront the person she thought might be Harry, she had written down all of the details in a note she left for herself. She found it when she was packing to return to Britain. She then left Boston but booked a flight to Canada and went to that country's Ministry of Magic.

She reported that a potential crime had been committed on her namely an illegal obliviation had been performed. Unlike Magical Britain, any obliviation not done by the official Ministry Obliviators â€“ who was only supposed to obliviate Muggles who witnessed magic â€“ was illegal. She was checked over and it found that yes, she had been obliviated.

It was a "well-known fact" in Britain that it was usually impossible to reverse an obliviation. She had done a lot of research before she obliviated her parents and was delighted and relieved to be told by Professor Flitwick that in other countries reversal was possible unless a "true master of the art" (such as someone like Dumbledore) had cast the spell or if too many years had passed since the obliviation was done. That was how her parents' memories had been returned to them.

Her memory of her confrontation with Harry was restored and she returned to Britain but she was very careful before she ratted out Harry. She would get the reward of her choosing before revealing this choice information. It took over a month of negotiations but the Minister of Magic, Kingsley Shacklebolt, eventually swore an oath on his life and magic that she would get a job at the Ministry. It would be a "real job" and not one in some thankless, useless, dead-end place like Misuse of Muggle Artefacts. No she would get real job and a respectable career.

And she did, just as soon as Harry Potter was captured on the Harvard campus (illegally) and spirited out of the United States (again illegally) and back to Britain where he belonged. The fact that he had become a citizen of the United States in both the Muggle and Magical Worlds and was under their protection didn't matter to Magical Britain.

Naturally an international incident occurred but Britain ignored it. It was their official opinion that "possession is nine points of the law" and Harry Potter had been officially proclaimed a 'National Treasure' and thus was the property of Magical Britain no matter

what the rest of the world thought.

One of the jobs she was offered was to be put in the Unspeakables Program. She didn't even listen to the other choices and immediately signed up. It never occurred to her that she didn't have the necessary qualifications to enter the program, not having a Mastery or an apprenticeship or even several years' experience in a certain field. She had been doing private study in various fields and that along with her brilliance she was positive she would have no trouble handling anything thrown at her - even the backlash from Harry's true friends and admirers.

Neville Longbottom had been the first to seek her out and give her the tongue-lashing of a harpy. He could have given Molly Weasley a run for the money but Hermione only ignored him and security had been quickly called and Neville â€“ nonentity that he really was despite being a Lord of an Ancient and Noble House â€“ was thrown out of the Ministry and slapped with a restraining order.

Hermione's home address was unlisted and untraceable â€“ she was being trained as an Unspeakable â€“ so she wouldn't be bothered by other angry people. She was surprised to find there were so many of them. Sad to say Minerva McGonagall, Pomona Sprout, Poppy Pomfrey and Filius Flitwick were among them. They of all people should know that it was what Professor Dumbledore wanted and everything he ever said or did had been for the benefit of the Magical World and the Greater Good.

No matter, it was done and could not be undone. Harry would eventually realize that it was for his own good and all for the best and, once he finally stopped brooding and moaning about his life, he would probably thank her.

But he wouldn't because he had been correct about so many things and she had been wrong. She hadn't run into any of the Weasleys as that "ship had sailed" long ago. She did have to admit that she was glad as yes, she had been potioned to "love and lust after Ron" and never really liked him before that. Molly and Ginnyâ€¦well she didn't like to think about them.

She had been away from the Magical World and had had no contact with anyone so she didn't know that two years ago, Ginny had given up waiting for Harry to be found. Molly wanted her married off because Ginny had been slutting around. The Weasleys as "heroes of the nation" still had some pull in the world and an "arrangement was made" to get Lucius Malfoy out of Azkaban. Draco had to marry Ginny who would make sure the Malfoys were converted to the Light. Lucius had been the one to refuse (much to Draco's relief) but in the end Draco had been forced to marry Ginny last year. It was not a happy marriage.

However, the lawsuit about Harry being semi-responsible for Fred's death was quietly reopened. There was no doubt (in Molly's mind at least) that they would win, and get as much money from Harry as possible if only for punishing him for not "doing his duty" as well as jilting poor Ginny "his one true love, his natural soulmate, etc."

The Ministry had been up to all sorts of things and made all sorts of plans now that the "National Treasure" Harry Potter had "finally

been rescued from the rogue Death Eaters who had kept him prisoner for the last six years." He was currently recovering from his ordeal but the Ministry was confident that he would soon be well enough to continue serving his world, etc., etc., blah, blah, and blah.

One of her Unspeakable colleagues kept her updated whatever something "happened to Harry" such as him being sued by the Weasleys and others for damages and the request that those in the lawsuit receive ALL MONEY AND PROPERTIES Harry owned. An expedited (but secret) trial was held, Harry lost (the expected outcome) but so did the plaintiffs. The Goblins informed them that any and all monies were gone, and Dumbledore had illegally sold all Potter properties for "the war effort" and the Black inheritance was still in dispute by the Malfoys.

But the Weasleys knew Harry had escaped with money because Bill, being an employee of Gringotts, found out. Therefore, to get "their well-deserved money" it was decided that Harry be "persuaded" to reveal his sources and turned them over. Naturally, it was all totally illegal but that never stopped a Pureblood when money (and revenge) was at stake.

By the time Kingsley had found out Harry had been inhumanely tortured by Ron, under the supervision of Molly and the amusement of Ginny. The word "FREAK" had been magically carved on his forehead to replace the lightning bolt scar he had lost, as well as other words over his body. He wasn't fed, given water or healed for 36 hours before the Weasleys were caught.

When Kingsley asked "Why didn't you use Veritaserum as that would be quicker and I know you have access to it" the reply was "Because it is illegal" he was told by a grinning Ron. In other words, they just wanted an excuse to torture him.

Other people were filing lawsuits, such as Lucius Malfoy, who wanted Potter in Azkaban for various (and ridiculous) reasons, despite Potter saving him from the Kiss. Since Narcissa had helped Harry in the forest, one of the last things he did before fleeing to America was to send letters to Kingsley, McGonagall, Neville and Luna telling them of the debt he owed Narcissa and Snape's real contributions to the war. Luna would have her father print the true story in The Quibbler (once he was released from Azkaban and healed) and although Lucius was sent to Azkaban, he wasn't kissed and Draco and Narcissa were safe from prosecution. So much for gratitude, but all is fair in love, war and politics.

A month passed and then two. Hermione was very happy in her work and was learning things she never dreamed of. Then it happened. She was called in for her ninety day review and told she was "found lacking" and was being dropped from the program.

Naturally she complained, threw around Shacklebolt's name but was still fired and told to vacate the Ministry by the end of the day. She did, however, get one last interview with Minister Shacklebolt.

"I did keep my promise Hermione," he told her when she accused him of breaking his promise. "I am still alive and have my magic because I did offer and give you the job of your choice. However, you were unqualified for it and I think you knew that when you accepted

it."

"But I'm good â€“ you know I'm good. I just need a bit more time and training and thenâ€|. "

"Then you will still not be qualified or accepted. It seems that in the short time you have been in the department you have managed to not make a very good impression. How did they say it? Oh yes, you have a very abrasive personality, don't work well with others, tend to be bossy even though you are the youngest and least experienced person in the department and," he hesitated shortly before saying, "and there were a few Unspeakables who didn't like that you turned in Harry Potter."

"But I was only doing my duty," she wailed. "What else was I supposed to do? Everybody wanted Harry back and I was onlyâ€|."

"Acting for your own benefit. You did strike a hard bargain before you'd tell us where he was. If you were really just 'doing your duty' you would have given us the information without a thought for your own gain. And that was another reason the Unspeakables gave for kicking you out. You showed that you would betray anyone â€“ even the only real friend you'll ever have â€“ for personal gain. That's not tolerated in a department as secretive and important as the Unspeakables. You have to have integrity and loyalty and you showed neither."

"YES I DID," the very angry girl screamed out. "I RISKED EVERYTHING AND SACRIFICED EVERYTHING IN THE WAR."

"You were just being patriotic â€“ like many others," Kingsley smirked. "At least you survived."

"I was betrayed," she snapped back. "I gave my all for the Magical World, had the best marks, was a protÃ©gÃ©e of Albus Dumbledore, was a certifiable war hero and I was basically cast out."

Kingsley shrugged his shoulders, "You were still a Muggleborn and your "protector" was dead. McGonagall did try to 'protect' you and mentor you but in the end, even the most talented Muggleborn needs a sponsor with '_real power'_ and influence and despite all of her loyalty, talents and positions, Minnie just didn't have enough clout.

"Well then I want another job!" she snapped out.

"The deal was for one job of your choosing. You had that opportunity, a rare opportunity at that considering you lacked the proper credentials. You blew it."

"So what happens to me now?" she asked fighting back tears.

"You go back to being a Muggle with magic and living in your original world."

"But that's so unfair!" she wailed.

"Life in any world is unfair," Kingsley said smugly. "However, I am not heartless as you did do good work in the war. I will give you a break. Since you are no longer an Unspeakable, the wards around your

flat will fall as of midnight tonight. Your address will be exposed to not only all of those howlers some people were trying to send you since you've been back and your address and contact information will once again be of public record so anyone can find you. That includes rogue Death Eaters and former 'friends' like Ron Weasley andâ€|. "

"Ronald Weasley is not a 'friend' and never really was. We justâ€|helped Professor Dumbledore help Harry andâ€|."

"And Ronnie boy has been after you since you exposed the lies in that 'true tell-all book' he wrote."

"Well most of it was lies â€" when it came to his part in the saving of the world."

"Of course it was, but 99% of the public didn't know it. As you know he lost a lot of money when others like Longbottom agreed with you and the book stopped selling and the second one wasn't published. He hasn't stopped 'looking for you to teach you a lesson' for calling 'a true and noble Pureblood a liar' and neither has his mother. You didn't know it but you were given protection as soon as you returned and entered the Unspeakable program. That stops at midnight and I wouldn't be surprised if Ronnienkins is lurking somewhere outside of my office waiting. He can't do anything to you at the Ministry which is why I am going to give you a portkey which will take you outside the Leaky Cauldron on the Muggle side. I suggest you immediately apparate to your flat, pack as fast as possible and leave Britain immediately."

"But I was living and working here for five years so whyâ€|."

"Because you have been under my personal protection at the request of McGonagall and Flitwick. Once your parents' memories were returned, their location was placed under notice-me-not wards preventing wizards and witches from finding them and thus you. You made a lot of enemies besides the Weasleys before you turned in Harry. Who knows how many you have now."

For once in her life Hermione Granger was speechless. If what Kingsley was saying was true, not only was she going to lose her place in the only world she wanted to be in, she would be losing her Muggle life as well as putting her parents in danger once again. From what she remembered from Harry's rant, he said he hadn't kept up with the gossip in Britain but she didn't believe him because he knew just too much about the things which had happened to her. He wasn't that perceptive but then why did he not know and mention what Ron had tried to do to her.

Harry had been right when he said that Ron would probably dump her once Harry had left and Ron could gloat that he had gotten something Harry wanted but couldn't have, namely Hermione. He had but not before she had made it perfectly clear that she wasn't ready to take their "relationship" to a sexual level. He had even tried to stun and rape her as it was "His prerogative as a Pureblood to fuck any Mudblood he wanted without consequence."

Ernie MacMillan had stumbled on the scene and saved her. Since "nothing serious had happened" before the rescue and Ron wasn't

returning to Hogwarts to complete his seventh year, he was given a slap on the wrist and sent on his merry little way. Molly, in her new invented position, had spent the year making Hermione's life as miserable as possible as did Ginny, but since she had the safety of living in the Head Boy and Girl suite with Neville to protect her she had survived.

However, any "reward for services rendered" which Hermione would have received was negated due to the "Weasley faction" (well Molly, Ron and Ginny as the others couldn't care less). They used their influence to completely drive her out of the world after she told the truth about Ron's book. Ron had started stalking her until Kingsley had come to her rescue back then by having a "serious talk" with him.

Kingsley wasn't finished yet. "I know you don't want to leave this world again but you have no choice. You should leave Britain and take your parents with you as well I'm up for re-election in a few months and the polls show that I will be voted out of office. I've made a few enemies myself including the Weasleys. In fact, rumor has it that Percy will be running against me."

His voice turned bitter as he revealed that "I gave that miserable little prick a chance. Granted he is good at what he does and is the perfect little bureaucrat, but he was a Ministry toady until the bitter end. He changed sides 'just in time' which was a little too convenient in my opinion. He has made a name for himself but I won't tell you what it is as it's one you don't say it in polite company."

"But he has worked hard, now travels in all the right circles and last year he married into money. He married Pansy Parkinson and is "converting and leading her and her parents onto the path of the Light. They were never marked Death Eaters, just supporters so they escaped punishment except for paying a few fines. It will be Parkinson money that will fuel Percy's campaign and that along with some others will be my stiffest competition."

"Matthew Abbott and Hannah's father and Gerald Corner are the other contenders. They have money and supporters and all of the good I have done or tried to do in rebuilding the nation has already been forgotten. But do you know what I don't care. I've done my best and it didn't really help matters. I've gone prematurely grey, my marriage went sour, friends, good acquaintances and many colleagues I trusted well, let's just say I've lost them."

"Are you still going to run?"

"Yes, for the sake of those few who want me to and feel I still have something to offer, I'll run but I'll lose. Then I will have to leave the country if Percy gets in and 'rumor also has it' that Molly is planning revenge on those she perceives as her enemies. That includes 'the Hogwarts traitors' as she refers to McGonagall, Flitwick, Sprout and others. Since the election is in June I've advised all of them to put in for retirement so that they get their pension before certain people start meddling."

"Therefore, I strongly suggest that you leave the country no later than tomorrow and that your parents leave before June. Compel them if you have to but leave because as I said, you lose all personal

protection at midnight and there are many just waiting to get you."

He gave her the portkey and the activation word and wished her luck. She thanked him for all that he had done for her over the years and wished him well and a "quick getaway" to a happier life. Just as she was about to activate the portkey he added one more thing.

"You interrupted before I could tell you who else was gunning for you. Just so you know, despite our best efforts and foolproof precautions, Harry Potter escaped last week. We think he's back in the States since he is a citizen and once again under the protection of the Americans. I won't say that he's going to come after you but you did betray him, lost him the life he had made for himself, interrupted his studies at University â€“ he just started what the Muggles call medical school at his University and now that's not a feasible option anymore so he was truly pissed at you."

"Harry Potterâ€|in Harvard Medical School?"

"Well that's where we found him. And before you say anything, Harry was always smarter than he let on. Even Dumbledore once admitted it but said it was good he didn't apply himself as he had that 'destiny' to fulfill and didn't need to be smart as he had people â€“ like Dumbledore â€“ to do his thinking for him. I wouldn't go near any school in the States if I were you as he just might be there."

"But Harry wouldn't hurt me. _**It's not in his nature**_ and I am still his friend."

Kingsley had to laugh at that statement. "For someone who is purported to be the smartest witch of her generation that has to be the most naÃ-ve thing I have ever heard. Stop to think when you get a chance â€“ preferably on the plane taking you away from Britain â€“ and go over the events of the last two months. For all that you think you know, well even Minnie McGonagall admits that you don't know the real Harry Potter and never did. He has suffered a lot in the past months and IT WAS ALL YOUR FAULT. I know that I don't want to run into him and I wasn't the 'friend' who betrayed him."

With that said and the words ringing in her ears Hermione Granger portkeyed out of the Minister of Magic's office and off to "another great adventure" to paraphrase one of Dumbledore's favorite sayings.

I took Hermione Granger 30 minutes to return to her flat, neatly pack (she was Hermione after all) her trunk, shrink it and then apparate away to her parents' new dental practice. She briefed them on all that had happen and the very probable consequences. They were not happy upon hearing that they now had only a few months to pack up and flee for their lives. It had taken them years to get re-established and now they would have no choice but to start over again.

It also didn't help matters when Hermione asked to borrow one of their charge cards because she didn't have enough funds to purchase a plane ticket or get settled. She got it but was warned that there was only a Â£5,000 limit and there were some charges already on it. "This is the very last money you'll get from us until we are both dead â€“ if then," her father had told her. "You messed up our finances badly the last time and now we have to start over again andâ€|we're just

too old at this point in time and will probably have to enter some witness protection program Â€" if we can."

She realized that her father was right. She had ill-used her parents once she had entered the Magical World and they were good people who didn't deserve it. She was truly ashamed but couldn't think about it now because she had to leave fast. She hadn't even thought to make arrangements to meet up with them once they left.

She apparated to the airport and booked a flight to Canada. She had transfigured her trunk into a suitcase and spelled the sides to look like it contained just clothing and toiletries instead of all of her worldly possessions including books, furniture and household items. She had her important papers in her briefcase and once she checked her luggage she found an isolated corner and apparated to the Muggle bank where she had an account.

Although the Goblins had vindicated her and Ron concerning the robbery it was only because she didn't have a Gringotts account because she was a Muggleborn and they had gone after Harry to collect "damages" since he had money. However, she was loathe to go anywhere near Gringotts and had been allowed to have her salary paid in cash and mostly in Muggle money. It cost her 5% of her salary in fees but she did most of her shopping in the Muggle World for safety reasons.

There wasn't much in the account because she had had to buy a new magical wardrobe and some new household items and of course books at Flourishes and Blotts. She had only been working for two months so after closing her account she had Â£63 and change in her Muggle purse. It would have to do for the moment. At the airport she changed Â£50 into Canadian dollars. It was soon time for her plane to leave and she tried not to cry as it took off as there was the very real possibility she would never return to her native land.

Two months later she was living in Toronto, Ontario, had rented an efficiency apartment on a month-to-month basis and was working as a temp. Much to her disgust she was doing mostly secretarial work but fortunately she was a very good typist and knew computers. It paid the bills and gave her time to decide what she should do next. She did have an identity in the Muggle World and the transcripts of her college as well as letters of recommendation. She also had a work visa which she had "acquired" and had finally gotten around to sending her parents a letter telling them where she was. She hadn't heard from them yet and it worried her.

Every Saturday she visited the small magical community. Since Ottawa was the capitol of Canada, the community there had most of the necessary shops such as wand shops, a broom store and the main branch of Gringotts. Toronto's equivalent of Diagon Alley was in a seedy part of town. Apparently Toronto had a large population of vampires and the first time she went looking for "Lucky Lane" she had accidentally wandered in, took one look and quickly left. It served not only vampires but Muggles and a few reckless wizards. She wouldn't make that mistake again.

Lucky Lane consisted of one "human pub" similar to the Leaky Cauldron but much brighter and cleaner. Like all the businesses in Lucky Lane Muggle currency was accepted along with galleons. The Gringotts branch was very small. There was a book shop, a clothing "emporium"

and the requisite apothecary store.

There was a shop selling familiars and their supplies. She almost cried seeing that as she remembered Crookshanks. Someone had killed her cat during seventh year out of revenge or spite but if she had to guess it would have been Ginny at Ron's request. She had walked into potions class only to see Crookshanks and Neville's toad Trevor in bottles filled with preserving liquid. Ginny had been walking around looking entirely too smug and would smile nastily whenever she saw Hermione or Neville. It had been just before NEWTS and no doubt done to demoralize her so she wouldn't do as well in this most important of exams. It had almost worked but in the end she pulled herself together with Neville's help and was top of her class.

Just before graduation Ginny's new broom went missing. Hermione had been accused and had been forced to swear on her life and magic that she was innocent. She was as it had been Neville who had arranged for it to happen. He told her after graduation and only regretted that he hadn't had the time or opportunity to do more against those %#&%*&%* Weasleys. Despite being considered "heroes" the Weasleys were still just as unpopular as they had been throughout their time at Hogwarts and with Molly being an "observer" matters had gone from bad to worse.

The most interesting shop was a combination or "general store" as she was told. It was the largest shop in the Lane and sold a large variety of this and that such as parchment and quills (Canadians used them only for certain things like legal documents, special spells and Ministry matters), a few brooms, a section of magical candy and pre-packaged ice cream, assorted wizarding equipment such as cauldrons and other magical knickknacks. Hermione was surprised to find that there were no "joke or pranking" products for sale but apparently Canadians were not all that into pranking or at least on the scale that Magical Britain was.

The rest of the Lane consisted of an apartment building for Magicals and a few empty stores. Hermione only went to the Lane to check out the books and newspapers. It carried international news and she was hoping to learn about what was going on back in Britain or if there was any word on Harry.

After buying her books she would have lunch in the pub. Although they did carry pumpkin juice and butterbeer, they were not considered the main drinks. They had soda and assorted fruit juices for non-drinkers and a large selection of Muggle beers, wines and liquors. She was told by the bartender that Britain was different from the rest of the Magical World.

"The Brits are the only ones that use Merlin as a deity. Other people say "oh God" or "by the gods" or things like that. The Brits used to but after the 1950s that old Dumbledore bastard turned Merlin into a deity claiming he was the greatest wizard who ever lived. However, if you look in the history books of other countries, you see that there have been many more powerful and famous wizards and witches throughout the ages. Is it true that British history is just all about Goblin rebellions and other such nonsense?"

She had to tell him yes. He suggested she buy some history books but should go to the main store in Ottawa as they had the best selection and that was where most schools got their books.

The more she found out the more she felt like her world was crashing down on her, probably because it really was. Naturally she had made no friends as even the bartender was just a helpful bloke who liked having a regular customer. She would also buy a supply of pumpkin juice or butterbeer when she came for her Saturday lunch.

She was waiting to hear from her parents before looking for a job. She had to know that they were safe and had made it out alive and healthy. She was thinking about continuing to work as a temp and attend night school and work towards a law degree but for that she needed money. There was still some juice on the credit card but she needed to save that for an emergency as although she was currently getting jobs, there was always the danger of slow times and if she got sick she couldn't work and wouldn't be paid.

She had accomplished a lot in just two months but until she heard from her parents she was really on her own for the first time in her life as there wasn't even a Minnie McGonagall or Neville Longbottom to help her. He had never forgiven her for burning Luna's scrapbook but he was civil and helpful to her while they were Head Boy and Girl. He wasn't mean or hurtful but that was because he was naturally a nice guy. He wasn't her friend but wouldn't allow harm to come to her if he could prevent it or at least until she had betrayed Harry.

Another month passed and then another before she finally heard from her parents. It had taken them five weeks to sell up and pack but the remainder of the time was spent at a safe house of the British Muggle government. They had to hide because the last thing Kingsley Shacklebolt had done for the Grangers was to tell the Muggle government about the Grangers' plight and the danger they were in and to get them safely out of Britain. They were still under government protection and were staying at a Muggle hotel until they could receive new identity cards and get settled into a new life. They were allowed to contact their daughter and she had happily met up with them at a small restaurant and then took them back to her efficiency so they could talk in private.

"Shacklebolt was assassinated about a month before the election," her Father told her.

"But the newspapers said nothing about that."

"According to the MI5 agent assigned to our case, he was killed and the fact was hidden until the election was about to take place and it was announced that he had died of some Magical disease â€“ I can't remember. From what our agent told us your old 'friends' the Weasleys had something to do with it because the one in politics was 'filling in for the sick Minister' and running the show. He got himself named temporary Minister until the election."

"You mean Percy Weasley won the election?"

"No, we don't know who did as at that point we didn't care" her Mother added. "But apparently Percy 'met with an accident' which is MI5 talk for somebody killed him."

"WHAT?" Hermione shrieked. It couldn't have been Harry. Harry wouldn't do such a thing and besides he probably went back to the

U.S. as fast as he could after his escape.

"Somebody killed him" her Father said happily. "But he didn't go alone as apparently he was in a meeting with his election staff andâ€|well no one escaped from the conference room due to it being silenced and sealed from the outside and then hydrogen cyanide in the form of Zyklon B permeated the room. Just so you know that was the gas used by the Nazis."

Hermione's blood ran cold. "Wasn't that outlawed? And how would someone in Magical Britain have access to it? Do you know by any chance if Ron was at the meeting?"

"Your good old friend the bottomless pit" Douglas Granger asked gleefully. "Now that I think about it he was there along with another brother _and his Mummy_. From what the agent told us, the room had been magically locked from the outside and the gas was already planted in the air ducts and nobody heard anything. When the Ministry elf tried to serve lunch via those magical means your people use, it wouldn't go through, so someone in charge was notified. By the time those Magical policemen were able to get in there, the Weasleys and the other six people were foundâ€|well you probably remember seeing the films of Auschwitz" Douglas added.

Hermione had to run to the bathroom and throw up her breakfast. Her parents patiently waited until she calmed down and when she was ready they continued their briefing.

Her Mother took over the tale saying "You probably noticed that British magical newspaper stopped being delivered here for the last month. That was because the country went in lockdown and all the other Magical nations said nothing to their public because there was so much horror going on and they were waiting the outcome of the election. Apparently a small revolution took place and the Weasleys weren't the only ones to 'pay the piper' for their behavior in the last few years."

"Do you know any names?" their daughter asked hesitantly. "I mean there were many Death Eaters who once again escaped justice so it was only logical thatâ€|."

"Some of them would die. Well we don't know a Death Eater from a Lotus Eater because you kept everything such a big secret from us" Douglas Granger said, "but our agent mentioned that there were a few 'Light people' who bit the dust â€" like the Weasley sister what's her name?"

"Ginny. I heard she married Draco Malfoy â€" oh no. Draco and his lot were Death Eaters and he had been forced to marry Ginny so his Father could get out of Azkaban. He must have killed her andâ€|."

"No, he didn't. I remember now" her Mum replied. "Everybody knew he and his family hated the bitch but a contract had been drawn up before his Dad got released. They had to swear on their life or something that they would NEVER harm or have someone else harm her otherwise they would lose all their money andâ€|their magic. Douglas, didn't she disappear or something?"

"Yes, she disappeared when she went to the Ministry to demand justice for her family or something and two days later her body was found

outside of that bank and she had beenâ€|how do I put this? Let's just say that you would have thought Jack the Ripper was back in town."

"The Malfoys were dosed with your lot's version of truth serum and had to swear some big time oaths your lot does and they were found not guilty. However, they were fined a large sum and rumor has it that they are leaving Britain for good because they received a warning that they were next or something like that" Douglas said.

Her parents didn't know much else and frankly they didn't care and told their daughter so. They also informed her that due to having to move again and start over they were not going to establish their own practice.

"We are very close to retirement age and had to again sell up for less than what the house and practice were worth. The government thinks they found me a job teaching at a dental school, although they won't say where yet, and your Mum will take a job as an employee at an established dental practice. We're buying a flat or what they call a condo. We have just enough cash left over to buy one of those, furnish it â€" as we had to sell all our furniture, dishes, pots, pans, etc. â€" and buy a car. Any money we earn will go towards living expenses and into a retirement fund."

"What your Father is trying to say baby doll" her Mum began "We will not be in a position to help you out with any further education. If you want to enter law, medicine or get a Masters in somethingâ€|you have to pay for it yourself."

Hermione looked shocked and was actually speechless as she had been counting on getting something from her parents in the way of tuition.

"We've heard you are working as a temp and knowing you, you were waiting for us to escape and get settled before you hit us up for tuition" her Father stated. "Well here we are, safe but having to start over again. I've been diagnosed with a touch of arthritis and will be glad if I get that teaching job as I'd have to retire a lot earlier if I remained in practice. Who knows how long I'll be able to teach or your Mum will be able to work. We won't have a - dime I think they call it here - to spare and since we don't have a job yet, we can't make plans until we actually have one and know what type of money we will be making."

"In other words" her Mum added, "We've given you an education and you have a university degree and are capable of getting a permanent job. It mightn't be a 'dream job' or one that you originally wanted but â€" TOUGH! Deal with it" her Mum shouted.

"Butâ€|butâ€|."

"No buts baby" her Dad snapped. "You are an adult with a university degree and should be able to earn a living while going to night school or saving up towards a getting another degree. You are almost 26 and it's time you stand on your own two feet, decide what you really want to do and then do it â€" on your own."

"We will, of course, give you birthday and Christmas gifts and maybe

" just maybe" once we get settled and have a job ourselves, we might give you money for a down payment on a used car if you need it to get to work/school or a down payment on a flat but nothing more as we just can't afford it" her Mum said. She then added that they wanted their charge card back as although Hermione had been using it, the card was in their name and they had to pay the bill every month.

Hermione started tearing up and she noticed her Dad looked away but her Mum remained firm. Hermione had never really thought about money until she started paying for her university education, but at least she had had her trust fund to pay for that and lived very frugally because she didn't work, just studied and learned. Her temp job was boring as it was just "grunt work" but paid the bills. She wouldn't want to do it permanently and would definitely need to earn more money if she wanted to continue with her education. Even if she still lived in an efficiency, had a full time, better paying job and took some night courses, it would take years to save up enough to get a law or medical degree.

Unfortunately she didn't know if she wanted to study Magic and get a job in Magical Canada or have a permanent job in the Muggle World. She didn't know if she wanted to be a lawyer or a doctor, become a university teacher or what. She was missing the latest semester of school but since she didn't know what she wanted to be and had to get money and then apply to a school, this gave her an opportunity to decide. Magical, Muggle or both. She'd have to do some research.

She continued working for the temp agency while sending out feelers. She contacted the Canadian Magical government inquiring about career opportunities but much to her shock she received a terse letter strongly advising her to seek employment in the Mundane world (what Canadians called Muggles). Her Hogwarts education was far below Canadian and American standards and due to her recent history in the Magical world, it was extremely doubtful any department in the Canadian Ministry of Magic would ever consider hiring her. It would probably be the same with civilian firms.

The letter went further saying that although they would grant her a new emergency identity in both worlds the word would eventually get out just who she was and what she had done. It was strongly suggested that she leave Canada but not go to the U.S. as she had helped cause an international incident and well for her own safety she should do everything possible to drop off the face of the Magical earth as it was confirmed that Harry Potter was looking for her. She would definitely not like it if he ever found her.

Being Hermione Granger she didn't want to believe that Harry would harm her or that she wouldn't be anything but an asset to Magical Canada and sent a letter to that effect. It was then she received a visit from her parents who also strongly urged her to "run for your life" and accept the fact that she had made herself a pariah in her preferred world.

For an intelligent person Hermione Granger had done many stupid things in her life and was going to do yet another one. She'd get a better Muggle job, earn better money earmarked for a post-graduate degree BUT she would also do private studying towards acquiring a Magical Mastery or two. No one, not a Pureblood, a Weasley or especially a deranged untalented, STUPID Harry Potter would deny her

Magic. She would have a Magical career and she would change the world to the way it should be and NO ONE WOULD STOP HER.

Three years had passed and no one had bother Hermione Granger. She found a better paying but extremely boring job in the Muggle world and did it for a year before finding a better position doing research for an international pharmaceutical company. She was taking night courses at a law school and in her free time she did work on her Charms Mastery. It had taken her two years before she found someone willing to mentor her in Charms when she really wanted Transfiguration, but it was a start and she was at least studying Magic.

She had absolutely no social life whatsoever but then she never really had one except when she had been helping Professor Dumbledore help Harry. Harry had been the only friend she ever had and others like Neville, Luna, Professor McGonagall, etc. had only been acquaintances or mentors. She didn't need friends or acquaintances and was content with employers, co-workers and fellow students. Her parents despaired for her future but she didn't care. She rarely saw them except for birthdays, Christmas and when they chose to visit her. She was too busy to do anything but obtain her goals.

She had taken the first permanent job in Ottawa to be nearer the Canadian Ministry of Magic, who she still occasionally haunted looking for her first and then other possible mentors. She kept up with what was going on in Britain. From the sounds of it nothing had really changed except administrations. The few remaining Purebloods still had all of the good jobs at the Ministry, Muggleborns were just barely tolerated, Werewolves other Magical entities were still be discriminated against.

There was the occasional scandal to read about such as when Bill Weasley was sent to Azkaban for murdering his wife Fleur. Apparently she had divorced him after the birth of their second daughter but she hadn't been able to get custody of her children due to Molly's interference. After Molly, Percy, Ron and Ginny had "mysteriously died" Bill had tried to reconcile with his wife and she finally came back but only to kidnap her daughters and take them to France. Bill thought she might be doing that and had set a trap. She told him she would never go back to "that #\$*##*#*#8's son and just wanted her daughters. Bill wanted their daughters and her and if he couldn't have themâ€|.

He almost got away with it but was caught in the end. Fleur's parents finally did get custody of their granddaughters but wanted Bill to be Kissed or sent through the Veil. An international incident had yet again happened and Britain had again lost face.

The Malfoys did not leave Britain and Lucius Malfoy finally became Minister of Magic. However he was assassinated after serving just three months. During that short time he had already done much damage and it had been one of his most "faithful supporters" who had arranged for the assassination and then assumed the position. Draco, his new wife, infant son and Narcissa had to flee for their lives as apparently someone had marked them all for death. Harry Potter was blamed but it couldn't be proven as after the Weasleys and a few others like Delores Umbridge had "mysteriously died" he had again disappeared.

News drifted out that many people were fleeing Britain. Neville Longbottom and his family had become American citizens as had Susan Bones and practically all of the Muggleborns. Hermione went to school with. A few Slytherins had also left during the small time the Weasleys had gained power, came back when Lucius Malfoy was elected Minister and then fled after his death. Once when visiting the Canadian Ministry Hermione saw Filius Flitwick who, like McGonagall, Sprout and others had fled Hogwarts. She almost went up to greet him but then remembering the warning she received from the government, thought it was safer not to despite desperately wanting to.

But she had survived and was well on her way to obtaining some of her goals. She had made a life for herself and had been proven right that Harry would never harm her. Although it was never proven that Harry was responsible for the deaths, many in Britain thought that he was, especially after what certain people had done to him once he was "rescued" by the Ministry with the assistance of Hermione Granger.

From the drips and drabs she had heard over the years, it was the general opinion that Harry had once again freed the British from another source of tyranny, namely the Weasleys, the Malfoy faction and some of the more vicious Purebloods. This enabled a new set of politicians to run for office and actually accomplish some good for once.

After Lucius' assassination, the International Confederation of Wizards (the "ICW") stepped in and appointed Thomas Ferndale to examine Magical Britain and make suggestions on how to improve the situation. He was a purported Half-blood from America, a talented wizard and had degrees in the Muggle world. He had accomplished a lot in reforming the political environment and was well-respected by many and a law was enacted to allow him, an American, to run for the Minister of Magic position. He had been nearly unanimously elected and the Daily Prophet predicted (truthfully and correct for once) that he would be the new "Savior" of Britain. Already, relations between Britain and other countries had vastly improved and for once in a very, very long time, Britain's future looked bright.

While Hermione was delighted that things were finally changing for the better, she was immensely disappointed that she had not been a part of what was being hailed as "the new Glorious Revolution of Britain" as she would have not only been a great asset to the movement, but had it not been for the Weasleys and Harry it might be she who was the Minister of Magic and would go down in history as the next Dumbledore.

But then she remembered the manipulations and damage caused by Dumbledore to accomplish his goals. She decided that she would have been unique and more famous and competent than Dumbledore and be more admired than Rowena Ravenclaw. However, it was not to be, and she would have the different, but successful and meaningful life, she had envisioned even before she found out she was a witch.

Once she got her law degree, perhaps she would run for office in the Muggle or Magical world and finally do some much-needed changes. This drove her to work harder as she was almost 29 and now she considered her biggest enemy was time. However, she was wrong.

It was a Sunday night and she had finished all of her assignments for

her law classes, finally did her laundry and managed to do some much-needed food shopping. She roasted a small chicken, cooked rice and frozen vegetables for her dinner and divided and packed up the leftovers into four meals to take to work and school. After taking a relaxing hot bath, she donned her pajamas and settled down to do some work on Charms.

She never heard the sound of someone apparating into her bedroom as he was a master in magic. She kept her wand under her pillow and this was the first thing he looked for and had she not been so engrossed in her research she might have heard it being snapped.

"Hello Hermione" said a voice that was slightly familiar.

She looked up and saw a stranger and her first reaction was to snap out "Who are you? How did you get in my flat? What are you doing here?" and probably would have said more but he interrupted her.

"Why Hermione, don't you recognize me?"

"No. Who are you?"

"Someone who was once your friend â€“ your ONLY friend â€“ and who now comes toâ€œ finally get some justice."

"But you can't be Harry" she replied. "First, your hair isn't messy and it is light brown, your eyes are a drab shade of blue, your build isâ€œ more bulky than Harry, your voice is different â€“ raspier â€“ and youâ€œ."

"The so-called brightest witch of her age surely remembers what glamours are. However, I am not under a glamour as they don't last permanently. After what the 'Terrible Trio' did to me, I had to have extensive Muggle surgery because they cast the scars they gave me with dark curses. The surgeons had to use cadaver skin because my body was so damaged and I had already used any good skin I had left to fix what the Dursleys and my time at Hogwarts did."

"I heard from one of my Unspeakable colleagues that the Weasleys had hurt you but not the specifics" Hermione stated. "I didn't want to listen to anything that the Weasleys were doing becauseâ€œ."

"Because you didn't care what happened to me" an angry Harry snapped out. "I told you what would happen if I ever went back to Britain. I know the obliviation I did on you was reverse so you knew! You knew and didn't care, did you?"

Hermione had no "acceptable answer" to give him so she decided to change the subject.

"Well you look great now" she said. "Of course you know that Molly, Ron, Ginny and Percy are dead and - would you believe it â€“ you were accused of doing it. Image that. You, Harry Potter, actually killing people, and people who he once considered family" and with that said she gave a nervous little laugh. Harry merely smiled.

"Not that you care or even be interested, but I managed to make a new life for myself. When I left Britain, I spent a lot of time getting

healed " again " and since my medical career was ruined, I switched majors. I obtained two Masters and, although I know you would never believe me, I was sent by the ICW to troubleshoot and give suggestions on how to fix Britain's government and " . "

"Surely you don't mean you are thatâ€|Thomasâ€|what's his name. "

"Yes, I am. I used contact lenses to change my eye color andâ€| . "

"And you want me to come back to Britain and help you make it into the Light paradise Professor Dumbledore always wanted." She didn't notice the expression of shock on his face as she began to rattle off some of the ideas she had come up with until that face turned angry and he (wandlessly) shot a stinging jinx at her. He then cast a silencing spell and bound her with magical ropes.

"Only you would think that with all of theâ€|harmâ€|done to me and so many others by Dumbledore that I would put into practice any of his plans for Albusland? Or would he rename Britain, Dumbledoriana? "

"Also, you have once again proved to me that you are in fact the dumbest smart person I have ever come across and hope never to meet up with again. You really don't get it do you? "

Of course she didn't as she was too busy thinking about her new, important place in the world she loved so much. Why else was Harry here than to ask for her help?

By now Harry had calmed down a bit and said "I did a few things before I left Britain. Just so you know, it was I who 'took care of the Weasleys' and a few others you probably didn't hear about or wouldn't care if you did. I went back to remove Lucius Malfoy as Minister but I did give his family a chance to leave Britain and never return unless they wanted to suffer a similar fate. "

He could tell by the expression on her face that she didn't believe him. So now he had to make her believe.

"You are thinking that the Harry Potter you met and knew for seven years could never be capable of cold-blooded murder, aren't you. Well I was not the same Harry Potter after I left Britain and when you stumbled upon me at Harvard. I had changed " for the better " had made a new life for myself and swore that I would never let anybody control or manipulate me again. "

"Then you came and callously destroyed my new life and all my plans and dreams without a second thought except for how it could benefit you. "

He then walked over to the now very frightened woman and put his face mere inches from her's and said in a voice worse than even Voldemort's "I am definitely not that Harry either as I pay my just debts whether good or bad. "

She was dreaming. She had to be dreaming a nightmare as Harry, her Harry would never do any of those things he claimed and would neverâ€|harm her. They had been through too much together and she had

sacrificed most of her dreams to save Britain.

But she wasn't dreaming. This was real and her fear increased with the next words he said.

"It's time for payback, Hermione. To quote Draco Malfoy, you will be getting what you truly deserve!"

The End

Note: Don't come chasing me with torches and pitchforks. Did you ever read a story called *_The Lady, or the Tiger_*? You get to make your own guess as to what happened in that story and in this story. Does Harry punish her and if so, how does he do it? I'm leaving it up to you. Comments welcome as long as Peeves doesn't catch on fire.

End
file.